

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 EA-06 SAM-01 IO-10 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01

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R 290645Z MAY 75 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6906
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 2618

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, BG, UR, XO, XB
SUBJECT: TINKERING WITH FACTS

1. OVER THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS, IT HAS BECOME EVIDENT THAT DACCA PRESS IS CARRYING INCREASED NUMBER OF NEWS STORIES AND ARTICLES FROM SOVIET SOURCES. MOST DRAMATIC EXAMPLE OF THIS OCCURRED TODAY (MAY 29) WHEN TASS WAS PRIMARY SOURCE OF STORIES DATEDLINE WASHINGTON REGARDING PRESIDENT FORD'S WESTERN EUROPE TOUR AND HIS MAY 27 BROADCAST ON ENERGY PROBLEMS.

2. THIS WILLINGNESS TO RELY ON SOVIET SOURCES HAS BEGUN TO ERODE MORE RAPIDLY BANGLADESH PRESS'S ALREADY WEAK COMMITMENT TO OBJECTIVITY. MOST NOTEWORTHY INSTANCE THIS DRIFT DEMONSTRATED BY ARTICLE APPEARING IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BANGLADESH OBSERVER ON MAY 28 OVER MOSCOW DATELINE WHICH ENTITLED "ASIAN NATIONS FOR COLLECTIVE SECURITY". ARTICLE PURPORTS TO CITE "FACTS" TO PROVE GROWING ASIAN SUPPORT FOR THE "COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM." FOR EXAMPLE, IT QUOTES MRS. GANDHI SPEAKING AT A DECEMBER, 1973 PRESS CONFERENCE: "IT IS

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CLEAR THAT A COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM IN ASIA IS AIMED

AT SECURING STABLE PEACE ON THE CONTINENT". ARTICLE ALSO SPRINKLED WITH QUOTES FROM INDONESIA'S ADAM MALIK AND OTHERS, ALL INTENDED SUGGEST SIGNIFICANT BACKING FOR SOVIET IDEA. AND, OF CORSE, CHINA IS DESCRIBED AS BEING SOLE OPPONENT OF PLAN.

3. ARTICLE ALSO ATTEMPTS TO IMPLY BANGLADESH SUPPORT FOR "COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM." IT STATES THAT "PRINCIPLES OF COLLECTIVE SECURITY"..."HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED IN TREATIES OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION CONCLUDED BY THE USSR WITH INDIA, EGYPT AND IRAQ, BETWEEN INDIA AND BANGLADESH, AND IN OFFICIAL JOINT DOCUMENTS SIGNED RECENTLY BY THE SOVIET UNION WITH INDIA, AFGHANISTAN, BANGLADESH, SRI LANKA, INDONESIA AND OTHER COURTIES." TO EMPHASIZE SUPPOSED BANGALEE SUPPORT FOR "COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM," ARTICLE NEATLY CHANGES TITLE OF WORLD PEACE COUNCIL-SPONSORED "ASIAN PEACE CONFERENCE", HELD IN DACCA IN MAY, 1973, TO "INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN ASIA".

4. GIVEN EFFECTIVE, IF STILL INFORMAL, CONTROL OF PRESS BY BDG, INCREASED USE OF SOVIET-PROVIDED COPY CANNOT BE MERE COINCIDENCE. HOWEVER, WE THINK SOVIETS MAY HAVE GONE A STEP TOO FAR BY PLANTING THE "COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM" STORY. BDG WILL NOT BE HAPPY OVER THE APPEARANCE OF A STORY ATTACKING CHINA JUST AT THE MOMEMNT WHEN IT IS ENGAGED IN ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH PEKING. NOR IS IT LIKELY TO BE PLEASED WITH THE IDEA THAT BANGLADESH, BY HOSTING THE 1973 PEACE COUNCIL MEETING, IS DEEMED TO ENDORSE THE "COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM"; AT THAT CONFERENCE, BDG VERY CAREFULLY REFRAINED, AS IT HAS DONE SUBSEQUENTLY, FROM EVEN MENTIONING THE "COLLECTIVE SECURITY SYSTEM" IDEA, ALWAYS LIMITING ITSELF TO ENDORSING THE "INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE" CONCEPT. LASTLY, IT MAY NOT FIND ANY PLEASURE IN THE IDEA THAT A TREATY WITH NEIGHBORING INDIA LINKS IT, WILLY-WILLY, WITH OHV SOVIET UNION; BANGLADESH IS VERY JEALOUS OF ITS SOVEREIGNTY.

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